

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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P 231748Z JUN 75

a0226.tFM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0640

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 16302

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNESCO, US, XF

SUBJECT: ALECSO DEMARCHE ON US CONTRIBUTION TO UNESCO

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REF: AMMAN 4904

1. DR. FATHI SOROUR, PERMREP OF THE ARAB LEAGUE EDUCATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (ALESCO) TO UNESCO, CALLED ON PERMREP JONES, JUNE 20. FATHI MADE LOW-KEY DEMARCHE ON ALESCO INSTRUCTIONS, TO ADVISE OF RESOLUTION PASSED AT ARAB LEAGUE'S GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING LAST APRIL; TEXT OF WHICH, INTER ALIA, "DEPLORED" REDUCTIONS OR SUSPENSION IN PAYMENT OF UNESCO CONTRIBUTIONS BY US, FRANCE, SWITZERLAND AND BELGIUM (SIC) IN REACTION TO ANTI-ISRAELI DECISIONS OF UNESCO 18TH GENERAL CONFERENCE LAST NOVEMBER.

2. FATHI ALSO INSTRUCTED TO CONVEY WHAT HE TERMED "THREE POINTS" THAT: (1) ARAB LEAGUE SOUGHT IN CONTEXT UNESCO CONTROVERSY TO "LESSEN TENSION" AND (2) WORK TOWARDS PERSUADING US TO PAY ITS ASSESSED CONTRIBUTION (\$19.5 MILLION FOR 1975); BUT (3) THAT ARABS DETERMINED TO KEEP IN FULL FORCE THE 18TH GEN.CONF. RESOLUTION SANCTIONING JERUSALEM EXCAVATIONS BY GOI WITH CUT-OFF OF UNESCO PROGRAM AID. HE
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STRESSED SEVERAL TIMES, INVITING US TO DRAW OWN CONCLUSIONS, THAT ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN UNESCO EUROPEAN REGIONAL ACTIVITY GROUP IS NOT RPT NOT ANY LONGER CONSIDERED AN "ARAB ISSUE." WHILE CLEARLY IMPLYIN THAT

ACTION ON THIS ISSUE WOULD NOT ELICIT STRONG ARAB OPPOSITION AND ESPECIALLY COUNTER-LOBBYING, SOROUR NEVERTHELESS ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT ARABS ON GUARD LEST BACKING OFF FROM EUROPEAN GROUP ISSUE BE MISINTERPRETED AS SIGN OF ARAB READINESS TO SOFTEN ON JERUSALEM SANCTIONS ISSUE OR ON EDUCATIONAL-CULTURAL RIGHTS ISSUES IN OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES.

3. IN RESPONSE TO PERMREP'S QUERY AS TO PROSPECTS FOR PASSAGE AT COMING BOARD SESSION OF RESOLUTION THAT WOULD IMPLICITLY RECOMMEND 19TH GENERAL CONFERENCE ACCORD ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN EUROPEAN GROUP, SOROUR URGED THAT US ALSO UNDERTAKE DEMARCHE WITH CAPITALS OF ARAB EXBD MEMBERS--EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA, SYRIA, TUNISIA AND MAURITANIA--IN ADDITION TO OTHER BOARD MEMBER GOVERNMENTS. ARAB PERMDELS HERE, ACCORDING SOROUR, USUALLY OPERATE WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS AND UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED BY HOME CAPITALS WILL VOTE AND LOBBY AGAINST ISRAEL "ON ANY ISSUE."

4. PERMREP ADVISED SOROUR IN RESPONSE LATTER'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION TO REPORT TO ALESCO (AND FOR CONSIDERATION OF LEAGUE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING IN CAIRO NEXT NOVEMBER) THAT US CONTRIBUTION WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE PAID THIS YEAR AS IT STILL CONTINGENT UPON CONCRETE ACTIONS WHICH PRESIDENT CAN CERTIFY TO CONGRESS. SOROUR

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 16302

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WAS ALSO ADVISED OF US DESIRE TO ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE MEASURES TO RESOLVE PRESENT IMPASSE. PERMREP AND DELOFF CAUTIONED SOROUR HOWEVER THAT ALTHOUGH POSITIVE ACTION ON ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN EUROPEAN GROUP WOULD BE CONSTRUCTIVE, THE RESOLUTION SUSPENDING UNESCO PROGRAM AID TO GOI DUE JERUSALEM DIGS WAS ANOTHER FUNDAMENTAL OBSTACLE TO CONCILIATION.

5. LOOKING AHEAD TO 98TH EXBD, SOROUR NOTED THAT POTENTIALLY VOLATILE AGENDA ITEMS INCLUDED REPORTS BY DG ON 18 GC RESOLTUION 13.1 (ACCESS OF OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES POPULATIONS TO EDUCATION AND CULTURE) AND, AT SECRETARIAT OPTION, ON JERUSALEM RESOLUTION (18 GC RES. 3.427). PERMREP AND DELOFF STRSSED IMPORTANCE FROM US VIEWPOINTDED REPORTS BY DG ON 18 GC RESOLTUION 13.1 (ACCESS OF OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES POPULATIONS TO EDUCATION AND CULTURE) AND, AT SECRETARIAT OPTION, ON JERUSALEM RESOLUTION (18 GC RES. 3.427). PERMREP AND DELOFF STRSSED IMPORTANCE FROM US VIEWPOINT OF AVOIDING ANY ACTIONS THAT COULD SPARK RENEWED CONTROVERSY AND THEREBY NULLIFY; IN TERMS PUBLIC OPINION EFFECT, CONCILIATORY MEASURES, E.G. ISRAEL AND EUROPEAN GROUP, THAT BOARD MIGHT ADOPT.

6. COMMENT: ALESCO DEMARCHE HERE FOLLOWED CLOSELY THE JORDANIAN DEMARCHE ON UNESCO REPORTED REFTEL WITH ADDED INFORMATION THAT ALECSO AND LEAGUE'S GENERAL COUNCIL ATTENTION ON UNESCO CONTROVERSY . ERRONEOUS INCLUSION OF BELIGUM AMONG COUNTRIES TAKING PUNITIVE ACTION AGAINST UNESCO AS PUZZLING TO SOROUR AS IT WAS TO US.

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7. IF NOTEWORTHY THAT SOROUR, AN EGYPTIAN LAWYER EDUCATED IN US WHO HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY AMONG MOST REASONABLE AND FRIENDLY ARAB LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES, CONFIRMED OUR READING THAT ACTION IMPLICITLY FAVORABLE TO ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN EUROPEAN GROUP POSSIBLE PROVIDED THERE CAREFUL ADVANCE PREPARATION THROUGH BOARD MEMBERS CAPITALS.

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